

FOR WIRE TRANSMISSION 8:30 A.M. ET, Friday, October 11, 2002

## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES SEPTEMBER 2002

The Census Bureau of the Department of Commerce announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September, adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$302.5 billion, a decrease of 1.2 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) from the previous month, but up 5.8 percent ( $\pm 1.1\%$ ) from September 2001. Total sales for the July through September 2002 period were up 5.3 percent ( $\pm 0.4\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The July to August 2002 percent change was revised from 0.8 percent ( $\pm 1.0\%$ ) to 0.6 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ).

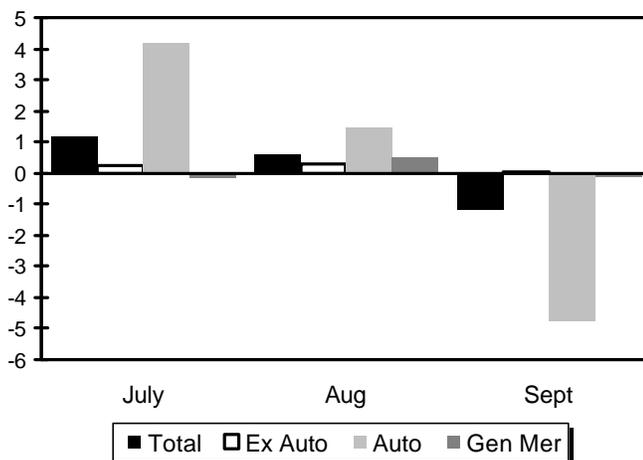
Retail trade sales were down 1.2 percent ( $\pm 1.1\%$ ) from August, but were 5.7 percent ( $\pm 1.1\%$ ) above last year. Building materials and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 11.3 percent ( $\pm 3.0\%$ ) from last year and sales of health and personal care stores were up 11.1 percent ( $\pm 2.1\%$ ) from September 2001.

*The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.*

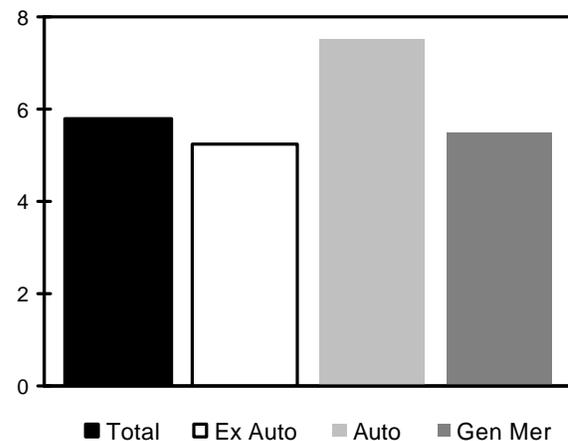
### Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Data adjusted for seasonal, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

From Previous Month



From Previous Year



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for October is scheduled to be released November 14, 2002 at 8:30 a.m.

Address inquiries concerning this report to Scott Scheleur, Service Sector Statistics Division, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC 20233. Telephone: 301-763-2713.

This report is available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's online Economic Bulletin Board. For information call 202-482-1986. The data are also available on the Internet - <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

**Table 1. Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business**

(In Millions of Dollars and Annual Percent Change)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>1</sup>				
		9 Month Total		2002			2001		2002			2001	
		2002	% Chg. 2001	Sept. <sup>2</sup> (a)	Aug. (p)	July (r)	Sept.	Aug.	Sept. <sup>2</sup> (a)	Aug. (p)	July (r)	Sept. (r)	Aug. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	2,651,188	3.9	286,548	321,081	308,361	271,014	305,003	302,461	306,029	304,218	285,919	290,791
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,982,445	3.7	216,406	236,142	226,951	206,602	227,600	229,048	228,923	228,223	217,641	220,586
	Retail .....	2,398,215	3.7	259,306	290,812	279,044	244,987	276,346	274,405	277,872	276,110	259,496	263,756
	<b>GAFO<sup>3</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	81,513	73,448	68,392	77,936	(*)	79,821	79,292	74,975	76,423
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	668,743	4.5	70,142	84,939	81,410	64,412	77,403	73,413	77,106	75,995	68,278	70,205
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	612,862	4.7	64,113	78,127	74,722	58,584	70,605	67,204	70,896	69,768	62,257	64,070
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	66,917	63,554	50,390	60,114	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,812	6,688	5,828	6,798	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	68,616	3.9	7,448	8,266	7,743	7,110	7,979	7,873	7,910	7,845	7,468	7,635
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,488	4,248	3,940	4,311	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,778	3,495	3,170	3,668	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	64,651	7.5	6,933	7,761	7,218	6,544	7,304	7,736	7,757	7,731	7,232	7,314
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,472	5,177	4,562	5,191	(*)	5,550	5,543	5,214	5,265
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,289	2,041	1,982	2,113	(*)	2,207	2,188	2,018	2,049
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	239,589	5.9	26,592	27,522	28,622	23,443	26,422	27,014	26,539	26,367	24,271	24,995
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,553	24,816	20,931	23,756	(*)	22,883	22,725	21,079	21,855
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	355,999	2.1	38,327	41,390	41,190	38,687	40,501	39,938	40,085	40,147	39,735	39,470
4451	Grocery stores .....	320,885	1.8	34,531	37,130	36,964	35,007	36,488	35,821	35,944	36,027	35,794	35,529
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,764	2,724	2,405	2,609	(*)	2,655	2,652	2,564	2,540
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	135,797	8.9	14,878	15,482	15,230	13,278	14,387	15,811	15,575	15,478	14,232	14,416
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,948	12,765	11,258	12,042	(*)	13,079	12,986	12,131	12,115
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	173,453	-5.9	19,646	21,424	21,276	20,171	21,411	19,626	19,619	19,755	20,111	19,571
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	118,743	2.9	12,911	15,263	12,982	12,229	14,923	14,341	14,476	14,427	13,371	14,182
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	895	752	762	923	(*)	861	861	816	900
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,781	2,475	2,513	2,781	(*)	2,775	2,768	2,651	2,753
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,479	4,710	4,245	5,128	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,289	1,736	1,614	2,311	(*)	1,790	1,781	1,703	1,837
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	60,567	6.5	7,082	7,786	6,587	6,563	7,498	7,615	7,501	7,393	7,004	7,294
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	316,678	7.4	33,983	38,376	35,533	32,641	36,224	38,312	38,349	38,162	36,313	36,241
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	154,544	-0.7	16,290	18,766	16,842	16,824	19,223	18,737	18,841	18,901	19,101	19,281
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>4</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,113	17,160	17,151	19,608	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,610	18,691	15,817	17,001	(*)	19,508	19,261	17,212	16,960
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,445	15,703	13,160	14,066	(*)	16,282	16,089	14,273	13,968
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,165	2,988	2,657	2,935	(*)	3,226	3,172	2,939	2,992
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	82,024	1.0	8,932	9,983	9,236	8,616	9,840	9,536	9,631	9,435	9,270	9,476
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	113,355	0.6	12,432	12,620	12,017	11,293	12,454	13,190	13,324	13,375	12,211	12,957
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	9,097	8,619	7,782	8,830	(*)	9,378	9,358	8,314	8,992
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	252,973	5.4	27,242	30,269	29,317	26,027	28,657	28,056	28,157	28,108	26,423	27,035

(\*) Advance estimates are not available from the subsample panel for these business classifications.

(NA) Not available. (a) Advance estimates. (p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

Note: Totals include data for business classifications not shown separately.

- Data are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12-ARIMA program and the factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted data shown in this publication. Factors and explanatory material are released on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.
- Advance estimates are based on early reporting by a small subsample of the full survey panel. All other estimates are based on the full sample.
- GAFO represents stores which specialize in department store types of merchandise (furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances(443), clothing & accessories(448), sporting goods, hobby, book, music (451), general merchandise(452), office supplies, stationery, and gift stores(4532)).
- Includes data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

**Table 2. Percent Change in Estimated Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business**

(Adjusted for seasonal variations, holiday, and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change <sup>1</sup>					
		Sept. 2002 Advance from --		Aug. 2002 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2002 through Sept. 2002 from --	
		Aug. 2002 (p)	Sept. 2001 (r)	Jul. 2002 (r)	Aug. 2001 (r)	Apr. 2002 through Jun. 2002	Jul. 2001 through Sept. 2001
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-1.2	5.8	0.6	5.2	1.8	5.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ....	0.1	5.2	0.3	3.8	0.6	4.3
	Retail .....	-1.2	5.7	0.6	5.4	2.0	5.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	-4.8	7.5	1.5	9.8	5.5	8.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-5.2	7.9	1.6	10.7	5.9	9.1
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	-0.5	5.4	0.8	3.6	-0.5	3.5
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	-0.3	7.0	0.3	6.1	-0.2	6.6
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	1.8	11.3	0.7	6.2	1.7	7.8
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	-0.4	0.5	-0.2	1.6	0.2	1.4
4451	Grocery stores .....	-0.3	0.1	-0.2	1.2	0.0	1.0
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.5	11.1	0.6	8.0	2.2	9.2
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	0.0	-2.4	-0.7	0.2	1.6	-0.4
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	-0.9	7.3	0.3	2.1	-0.7	3.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	1.5	8.7	1.5	2.8	2.3	5.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.1	5.5	0.5	5.8	0.4	5.6
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.6	-1.9	-0.3	-2.3	-1.4	-2.2
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	-1.0	2.9	2.1	1.6	1.2	1.5
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	-1.0	8.0	-0.4	2.8	0.0	4.8
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	-0.4	6.2	0.2	4.2	-0.3	5.0

(p) Preliminary. (r) Revised.

(1) Percent change rounded to nearest tenth.

Official Business

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

### Source of Data and Reliability of Estimates

**Source of Data:** The Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey each month to provide an early indication of sales of retail and food service companies. The Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey is a voluntary survey of a sub-sample of about 5,000 firms selected from the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. Firms responding to this survey account for approximately 65% of the dollar volume estimate.

**Reliability of Estimates:** The reliability of the estimates is a function of sampling and nonsampling errors. The margin of sampling error, as included on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90% confidence

interval. If for example, the trend estimated is +1.2% and the standard error is 0.9%, then the margin of sampling error is  $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9\%$  or  $\pm 1.5\%$ , and the 90% confidence interval is -0.3% to +2.7%. If the interval contains 0, it is uncertain whether there was an increase or decrease. For monthly level, the coefficient of variation (CV) is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value  $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$  (the estimated value). Estimates of sampling variability are given in Table 3. Nonsampling error, on the other hand, can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, and response errors. Although not directly measured, precautionary steps are taken to minimize nonsampling error. Additional survey information is available at [www.census.gov/svsd/www/advtable.html](http://www.census.gov/svsd/www/advtable.html).

**Table 3. Measures of Variability of and Revision to Advance Estimates for Level and Trend**

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Level of sales: Median CV <sup>(2)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Trend (percent change): Median standard error <sup>(2)</sup> for			Revision for month- to-month change <sup>(1)</sup>	
			Current Mo. to Previous Mo.	Current Qtr. to Previous Qtr.	Current Mo. to Current Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	total .....	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.6	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.1	0.2
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.7	0.0	0.2
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	1.9	1.8	0.7	1.8	-0.2	0.7
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers	2.1	1.9	0.7	2.0	-0.3	0.7
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	3.8	1.9	1.0	2.5	0.1	1.0
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.5	0.6	0.5	1.4	0.3	0.5
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;...</b>						
	supplies dealers.....	1.7	1.0	0.6	1.8	0.1	0.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	2.4	0.5	0.6	1.3	-0.1	0.4
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	1.8	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.8
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	stores .....	1.4	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.0	0.5
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	music stores.....	2.7	2.5	1.5	3.0	0.0	1.0
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	3.4	3.4	1.6	3.7	0.5	0.9
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	7.0	3.5	1.3	4.2	0.1	1.0
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	2.1	1.0	0.7	1.8	0.3	0.9



(1) These columns measure the difference between the estimates of trend for the same pair of data months, i.e. the difference between the Advance/Preliminary ratio and the Preliminary/Final ratio estimates. Revisions are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.

(2) Medians are based on estimates from the 12 most recent months.